

THE PUBLIC ROLE OF PROFESSIONALS:
DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING THE
CIVIC-MINDED PROFESSIONAL SCALE

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DEDICATION

To my extended family and my friends
who have helped me
to live a well-balanced life.

To my adult children, Jesse, Caleb, and Abbey
who bring me
deep joy.

and

To my loving husband, Buck
who constantly supports me
in who I am and who I am becoming.

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PREFACE

Since college, one of the scripture verses that has framed my perspective is from Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 10. In a passage from his letter to the Ephesians, written during imprisonment in Rome, Paul described the bountiful grace of God. He described God as one “who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us” (vs. 4) and one who shows “the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness towards us” (vs. 7). Paul went on to state the following:

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
(*New American Standard Bible*, Ephesians 2:10, 1973, p. 296)

This truth has guided my thinking and my walking for a number of years. It is after all, the *walking into the good works* that is the challenge in this life. There are plenty of good works to be part of, but having the courage, faith, and fortitude to embark upon the good, and then be dedicated to the good, is a human expression of the divine that intrigues me.

I know my own limitations and I am quite aware when the caution bell rings that says hold back, or not now, or no I can not do that. But I have also become aware of my abilities to stay dedicated to a task, to be devoted to a call, to climb mountains, and to finish this research in a timely way. My goal was to complete my Ph.D. during this particular season of my life, and I have done just that. For that, I am grateful.

I also know that good works do not ultimately last. Solomon, in the wisdom of his old age, clearly described this reality in Ecclesiastes. Work is like sand. The Tibetan monks know this very well. Yet the care given to work, even though it is sand, is a deep

goodness for humankind. To do my work as if it matters, and to do it knowing that in the eternal sense it matters not, has been my goal. Maintaining this balance has been a dance.

I began this journey a long time ago. A former professor asked me, “If you could picture yourself successful, what would you want to be successful at doing?” For me, the answer was immediate. I would want to be a great college professor. What is great? To me a great college professor challenges students to think, to ask questions, to humbly seek the truth knowing that it is in not-knowing that wisdom abides.

My hope is that I have become a better educator as a result of completing this work. I am also holding out hope that the discoveries in neuroscience may hold true. If using one’s brain is one strategy to delay the aging process, I have surely become younger as a result of completing this research. I will always enjoy the fountain of youth.

ABSTRACT

Julie Adele Hatcher

THE PUBLIC ROLE OF PROFESSIONALS: DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING THE CIVIC-MINDED PROFESSIONAL SCALE

This research provided understanding of the concept civic-minded professional. A civic-minded professional is one who is (a) skillfully trained through formal education, (b) with the ethical disposition as a social trustee of knowledge, and (c) the capacity to work with others in a democratic way, (d) to achieve public goods. Forty-four items were developed for the Civic-Minded Professional (CMP) scale based on a multi-disciplinary literature review (e.g., philosophy, political science, philanthropic studies). The CMP scale was part of an online survey distributed to a national sample of faculty in higher education ($n=373$) to evaluate the reliability ($\alpha=.95$) and validity of the scale.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) reduced the CMP scale to thirty-two items. EFA of the CMP-32 scale, together with prior conceptual analysis of the construct, provided a basis for identifying five factors. Four hypotheses were tested to evaluate the validity of the CMP-32 scale. In comparing faculty, Nominees for national awards (i.e., *Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service-Learning*, *Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement*) scored higher on the three of the five CMP-32 factors (i.e., *Voluntary Action*, *Citizenship*, *Social Trustee*) than Non-Nominees. There was no

significant difference between the two groups on two of the five factors (i.e., *Identity and Calling, Consensus Building*). Faculty who taught service learning classes scored higher on the CMP-32 scale than faculty who did not use this type of teaching strategy.

Additionally, faculty who engaged in collaborative research projects in the community scored higher on the CMP-32 scale than faculty who did not use this type of research.

Empirical tests for convergent validity correlated scores from the CMP-32 with the (a) Civic Engagement Index (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, 2005), (b) items from the New England Research Center for Higher Education, and (c) Public Interest Subscale (Perry, 1996). Correlation was significant, $p < .01$, for each of the five factors of CMP with these measures.

The importance of this research lies in the future use of the CMP-32 scale in empirical research on the civic-dimensions of professionals by measuring civic-mindedness as either an independent or dependent variable.

Robert G. Bringle, Chair

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